

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 TRSE-00 /071 W

-----032053Z 000161 /44

R 030903Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6697

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E. O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, RP, LY, XF

SUBJECT: MINDANAO NEGOTIATIONS

REF: MANILA 3009

1. ON WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE LAST DAY OF SECOND ROUND OF TRIPOLI NEGOTIATIONS, OUTCOME AS VIEWED FROM MANILA REMAINS UNCERTAIN. FOR SECOND DAY IN ROW PRESIDENT MARCOS (ADDRESSING REPORTERS IN BAGUIO MARCH 2) ACCUSED MNLF OF PROVOKING STALEMATE BY OPPOSING PLEBISCITE. HE AGAIN OPINED THIS IS "NEGOTIATING POSITION," EXPRESSED FAITH IN QADHAFT'S "SINCERITY," AND IN ACHIEVEMENT OF ULTIMATE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. HE REPEATED THAT AS "FINAL RECOURSE" IMELDA MIGHT FLY TO TRIPOLI.

2. PRESS ALSO REPORTED ADMIRAL ESPALDON SPEECH IN ZAMBOANGA ACCUSING LOCAL MNLF OF "SEEMING INSINCERITY," INTENSIVE MILITARY RECRUITING AND TRAINING, COLLECTING TAXES, AND
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OTHER ACTIVITIES "NOT MOTIVATED BY DESIRE FOR PEACE."

HE WARNED LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS NOT TO CONSORT WITH MNLF.

3. IN REMARKS RATHER PARALLEL TO MARCOS, LIBYAN SECOND SECRETARY TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 2 THAT ALTHOUGH PLEBISCITE ISSUE A PROBLEM, THERE WAS STILL GOOD CHANCE OF SETTLE-

MENT. HE SAID QADHAFI VERY MUCH WANTED ONE, AND POINTED OUT THAT FIRST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ALSO ON VERGE OF DISASTER "UNTIL LAST HALF HOUR." HE SAID LIBYANS NOT TAKING POSITION BUT ONLY ACTING AS MEDIATORS, AND VOICED PERSONAL OPINION THAT "MARCOS HAS A RIGHT TO HAVE A PLEBISCITE." HE SAID BARRING TOTOAL BREAKDOWN QADHAFI WOULD DEFINITELY VISIT MANILA IN EARLY APRIL AND MIGHT BE ALL THE MORE ANXIOUS TO DO SO IF HIS PRESENCE WOULD RESOLVE STALLED NEGOTIATIONS.

4. IN MEANTIME RUMORS CIRCULATING IN MANILA A) THAT IMELDA HAS ALREADY LEFT FOR LIBYA, B) THAT BOTH FERDINAND AND IMELDA HAVE LEFT, AND C) THAT FIRST FAMILY HAS LEFT AND DEFENSE UNDERSEC BARBERO HAS RETURNED TO MANILA AND OCCUPIED MALACANANG IN PALACE COUP. COMMENT: NONE OF THIS CONFIRMED AND MOST OF IT APPARENTLY SHEER FANTASY. END COMMENT.

5. WHILE OUTCOME OF NEGOTIATIONS VERY MUCH IN DOUBT, IT STILL POSSIBLE THAT BOTH SIDES WILL BE WILLING TO SETTLE FOR LESS THAN CURRENT DEMANDS, AND THAT PERSONAL DIPLOMACY WILL END CURRENT PHASE OF BIZARRE-BAZAAR HAGGLING. HOWEVER, EVEN ASSUMING DEGREE OF GOODWILL AND "SINCERITY" ON BOTH SIDES, DANGER OF FATAL COMMUNICATION FAILURE BETWEEN PARTIES APPEARS GREAT.
SULLIVAN

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Message Attributes

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